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Lyndon LaRouche, Cult Leader and Eight-Time Presidential Candidate, Dies at 96
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Lyndon LaRouche and Anticultists' Methods

September 26, 2024 · 8 mins read

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We've previously mentioned the ongoing persecution of former U.S. President Donald Trump by anticult organizations, a campaign that has lasted several years. We've also covered that the shooting at the Pennsylvania rally on July 13, 2024, where the assassination attempt on him took place, turned out to be part of a broader strategy by anticultists to discredit and undermine Trump's political career. However, few are aware that the pre-election anticultist fervor in the United States is not happening for the first time.

In the early 1980s, American political figure Lyndon LaRouche faced organized opposition from anticultist groups[1], such as the American Family Foundation (AFF)[2], Cult Awareness Network (CAN), and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL)[3].

Notably, AFF eventually evolved into the International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA)[4], which is still active today, while CAN lost a court case in 1995 and went bankrupt. These groups opposed what they deemed "destructive cults" and accused LaRouche of using mind-control techniques to manipulate his followers, actively warning the public through the media and initiating lawsuits.

Sounds familiar, doesn't it?

Especially when you take a closer look at their so-called alarmist warnings, which fit the pattern of a typical sponsored discreditation strategy. "The IMPACT" documentary did an excellent job of describing these methods and bringing this topic to light. But let us rewind a bit.

Lyndon LaRouche

Lyndon LaRouche

Lyndon Hermyle LaRouche, Jr. (September 8, 1922 – February 12, 2019) was an American economist and political activist, founder of several political organizations, collectively known as the LaRouche movement. He ran for president eight times

between 1976 and 2004, once as a candidate from the U.S. Labor Party and seven times as a "candidate seeking candidacy" from the Democratic Party.

Critics often pointed to the unusual internal structure of the movement. Former members and outside observers claimed that LaRouche created a cult where he was the central figure, controlling his followers' lives. Based on these allegations, numerous accusations of exploitation, manipulation, and even abuse of power emerged.

Lyndon LaRouche

We won't delve into the views and statements of Lyndon LaRouche, his conspiracy theories, economic ideas, or political decisions. What interests us is the fact that in the 1980s, he

became the target of aggressive attacks by anticultist organizations (AFF, CAN, ADL, and others). He was labeled with numerous stigmas, accused of being the leader of a left-wing sect, a political cult, and was charged with extremism, antisemitism, racism, financial fraud, insanity, and whatnot.

He was even accused of fascism. In 1989, Dennis King wrote a book titled “Lyndon LaRouche and the New American Fascism,” which aimed to expose LaRouche and his political agenda, which the author claimed posed a threat to American democracy.

LYNDON LAROUCHE

AND THE NEW AMERICAN FASCISM

BY DENNIS KING

“Lyndon LaRouche and the New American Fascism” by Dennis King

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The cult and the candidate

Lyndon LaRouche is a convicted fraudster and virulent anti-Semite. Now he's campaigning for the American presidency. Terry Kirby investigates his sinister global network - and his conspiracy theories about Tony Blair

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He has warned that the international monetary system is about to collapse and that five billion people will die in the ensuing chaos. The Royal Family and MI6 are, he claims, responsible for the international drugs trade. Welcome to the weird world of Lyndon LaRouche, the 81-year-old who is campaigning as an "independent Democratic candidate" for president of the United States in this November's election, for the fifth time. A millionaire who describes himself as "the world's leading economic forecaster", LaRouche is also a convicted fraudster and conspiracy theorist par excellence.

He has warned that the international monetary system is about to collapse and that five billion people will die in the ensuing chaos. The Royal Family and MI6 are, he claims, responsible for the international drugs trade. Welcome to the weird world of Lyndon LaRouche, the 81-year-old who is campaigning as an "independent Democratic candidate" for

Screenshot from The Independent website

LYNDON LAROUCHE | FEB. 13, 2019

Political Cult Leader Lyndon LaRouche Dies at 96

By Ed Kilgore, political columnist for Intelligencer since 2015

One of the strangest political figures ever lost his influence and following in recent years. Photo: Bettmann Archive

One of America's contributions to the 20th-century's rich legacy of dangerous political cult leaders, Lyndon LaRouche, has reportedly died at the age of 96. The native of New Hampshire was already in his 40s when he first made his mark as a Marxist New Left leader in the late 1960s who fought with other factions over the carcass of the once-influential Students for a Democratic Society. By the mid-1970s he had developed a tightly organized cult of personality that veered far right, and then became a pervasive if annoying presence from the street corners where LaRouche's ubiquitous pamphlets and publications were distributed, to the candidate debates where his "movement's" articulate if borderline-deranged apostles appeared for years in every corner of the country.

MOST

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Screenshot from the Intelligencer section of the New York Magazine website

DAILY BEAST

ALL CHEAT SHEET MEDIA OBSESSED ROYALS POLITICS ENTERTAINMENT OPINION INNOVATION U.S. NEWS SCOUTED

Lyndon LaRouche, Cult Leader and Eight-Time Presidential Candidate, Dies at 96

R.I.P.

Audrey McNamara Reporter
Published Feb. 13, 2019 5:15PM EST

Fred Prouser/Reuters

Lyndon LaRouche, founder of the National Caucus of Labor Committees, a group known for its cult-like mentality and devotion to conspiracy theories, has died at the age of 96. LaRouche started his political career in the Socialist Workers Party, but moved increasingly to the right with every decade. In 2009, LaRouche commissioned

Screenshot from The Daily Beast website

Typical Anticult Terrorist Tactics

"The IMPACT" documentary was the first to openly reveal the stages of destructive tactics by anticult organizations—from the initial labeling of groups as "cults" or "sects" to the eventual physical elimination of members or leaders of the

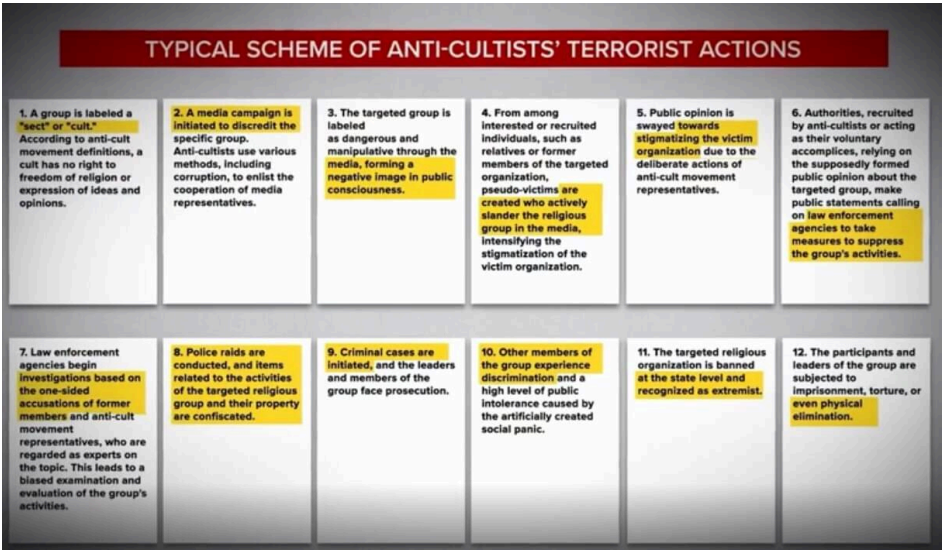
targeted group. These methods have been studied and documented using more recent examples of organizations that have been actively operating over the past 30 years. In particular, the Russian RACIRS, acting under the auspices of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) and political elites, as well as the French FECRIS, which can be considered the European branch of RACIRS, and there is much evidence of this. We will return to this topic later.

In retrospect, the battle against Lyndon LaRouche went through nearly all the stages of the criminal anticult terror scheme outlined in "The IMPACT."

We'll list them below:

- Labeling the group as a "sect" or "cult,"
- A successful media campaign,
- Creating a negative public image,
- Using pseudo-victims or former members of the targeted organization to amplify stigmatization,
- Inclining public opinion towards stigmatizing the victim organization,
- Urging law enforcement to take measures against the undesirable group,
- Investigations by law enforcement, biased reviewing of the group's activities,
- Police raids,
- Criminal charges,

- Attempts at physical elimination…


TYPICAL SCHEME OF ANTI-CULTISTS' TERRORIST ACTIONS
1. A group is labeled a "sect" or "cult." According to anti-cult movement definitions, a cult has no right to freedom of religion or expression of ideas and opinions.
2. A media campaign is initiated to discredit the specific group. Anti-cultists use various methods, including corruption, to enlist the cooperation of media representatives.
3. The targeted group is labeled as dangerous and manipulative through the media, forming a negative image in public consciousness.
4. From among interested or recruited individuals, such as relatives or former members of the targeted organization, pseudo-victims are created who actively slander the religious group in the media, intensifying the stigmatization of the victim organization.
5. Public opinion is swayed towards stigmatizing the victim organization due to the deliberate actions of anti-cult movement representatives.
6. Authorities, recruited by anti-cultists or acting as their voluntary accomplices, relying on the supposedly formed public opinion about the targeted group, make public statements calling on law enforcement agencies to take measures to suppress the group's activities.
7. Law enforcement agencies begin investigations based on the one-sided accusations of former members and anti-cult movement representatives, who are regarded as experts on the topic. This leads to a biased examination and evaluation of the group's activities.
8. Police raids are conducted, and items related to the activities of the targeted religious group and their property are confiscated.
9. Criminal cases are initiated, and the leaders and members of the group face prosecution.
10. Other members of the group experience discrimination and a high level of public intolerance caused by the artificially created social panic.
11. The targeted religious organization is banned at the state level and recognized as extremist.
12. The participants and leaders of the group are subjected to imprisonment, torture, or even physical elimination.

Screenshot from "The IMPACT" film: "Typical Scheme of Anti-cultist's Terrorist Actions"

At the final stage of this years-long discreditation campaign, in 1986, a real siege of Lyndon LaRouche's home took place, when federal authorities raided his estate in Leesburg, Virginia. This event was part of a larger investigation into him and his associates, who were later charged with mail fraud and conspiracy to defraud the IRS.

The raid was dramatic, involving armed agents and even helicopters, marking a significant phase in the legal battles that LaRouche and his movement faced.

After a series of legal proceedings, LaRouche was found guilty and, in 1988, sentenced to 15 years in prison, while his associates received shorter sentences. Throughout the trial, LaRouche and his supporters claimed that the charges were politically motivated, but despite numerous appeals, the convictions stood. He began serving his sentence in 1989 but was released early in 1994 after serving five years.

Lyndon LaRouche enters the U.S. District Court House in Alexandria, Virginia to face trial on charges of mail fraud and tax evasion, November 21st, 1988. Photo Credit: Bettmann via Getty Images

Once again, in this article we are not trying to evaluate Lyndon LaRouche as a public and political figure; we are interested in the methods of how anticult organizations exert influence on their target victims.

Next, we will examine a particularly illustrative piece of investigative journalism published by “The Washington Post” in 1985. The article claimed that members of LaRouche’s movement were living in overcrowded apartments and barely had enough to eat, while their basic needs were paid for by the movement. They worked day and night like bio-robots, losing their families, burning out personally, they raised funds, or sold newspapers, dedicating almost every waking hour to the cause.

Let’s take a closer look at an article from John Mintz in “The Washington Post”, especially since it has amazingly survived after almost 40 years. From the very first lines, we see a blunt categorical assertion that Lyndon LaRouche was the leader of a cult. Note that at that time, no country in the world had a legal definition for the terms “cult” or “sect,” and no country has established one to this day.

The label “cult” (or “sect”) is the first step in the anticultists’ scheme of terrorist actions.

LAROUCHE

Ideological Odyssey: From Old Left to Far Right

By John Mintz
Washington Post Staff Writer
January 14, 1985

It was January 1974, and Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr., the leader of a left-wing sect, was telling his followers why they had to believe his story that one of them had been brainwashed by the Soviet secret police.

"Any of you who say this is a hoax, you're cruds!" LaRouche told his followers. "You're subhuman! You're not serious. The human race is at stake."

It was vintage LaRouche, filled with invective and dire warnings about the fate of the world, a style reflected in his group's literature and in his public statements.

Last Nov. 25, 1,500 people from 40 nations gathered in the ballroom of a Crystal City hotel for a conference of the Schiller Institute, named for 18th century German poet Friedrich Schiller. They heard another, more toned down address by LaRouche, by then a three-time presidential candidate espousing right-wing views.

"Men and women of other nations have seen proof that the spirit of 1776 is still alive within these United States," LaRouche told the group, while his words were translated into four languages and piped into foreign visitors' earphones. "The United States of 1776 is not yet fully awakened, but forces within our government and among our citizens are sitting up and rubbing their eyes."

The story of how Lyndon LaRouche transformed himself from Marxist theoretician to red-white-and-blue conservative in 10 years is a tale of a political chameleon.

Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr.
National Caucus of Labor Committees leader

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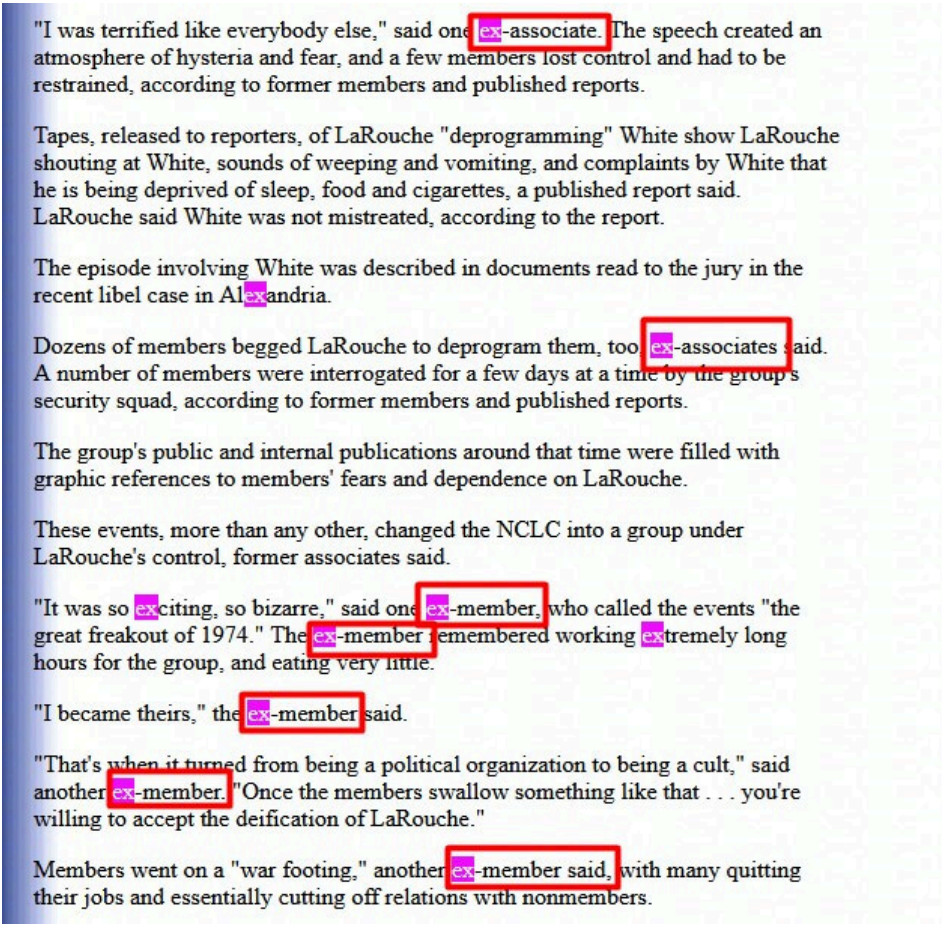
Screenshot of the article “Ideological Odyssey: From Old Left to Far Right” by John Mintz, Washington Post, January 14, 1985

The very fact of releasing an “investigative” publication, clearly aimed at discrediting a specific person without providing factual and objective evidence of guilt, indicates that the article was actually commissioned. This aligns with the second and third stages of the anticultists’ scheme of terrorist actions – launching a media campaign to discredit a specific group. Through this, the group is labeled as dangerous and manipulative by means of the media, inevitably creating a negative image in the public consciousness. And that is precisely what happened.

Next, we move to the fourth stage of the anticultists’ scheme of terrorist actions: “Pseudo-victims are created from among the relatives or former members of the targeted organization. These ex-members or defectors actively slander (in this case) the political group, amplifying the stigmatization of the victimized organization.”

It is notable that the entire publication is literally filled with the opinions of these so-called “former” members, whom no one has ever seen. After all, in this simple way, any attitude regarding any individual can be imposed on society. In our view, blatantly manipulative technique, and it is quite odd to see it on the pages of “The Washington Post.” Then again, it was 1985…



"I was terrified like everybody else," said one ex-associate. The speech created an atmosphere of hysteria and fear, and a few members lost control and had to be restrained, according to former members and published reports.

Tapes, released to reporters, of LaRouche "deprogramming" White show LaRouche shouting at White, sounds of weeping and vomiting, and complaints by White that he is being deprived of sleep, food and cigarettes, a published report said. LaRouche said White was not mistreated, according to the report.

The episode involving White was described in documents read to the jury in the recent libel case in Alexandria.

Dozens of members begged LaRouche to deprogram them, too, ex-associates said. A number of members were interrogated for a few days at a time by the group's security squad, according to former members and published reports.

The group's public and internal publications around that time were filled with graphic references to members' fears and dependence on LaRouche.

These events, more than any other, changed the NCLC into a group under LaRouche's control, former associates said.

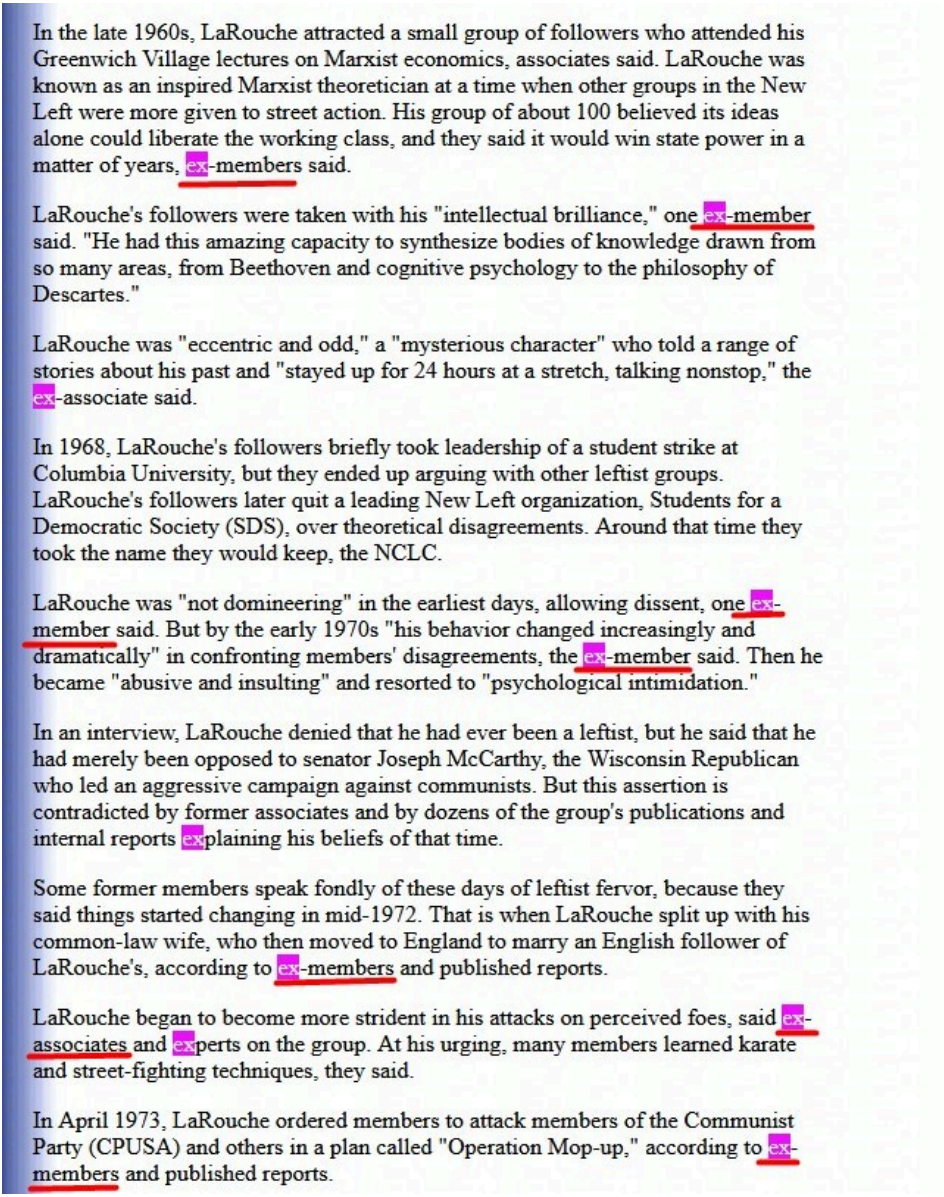
"It was so exciting, so bizarre," said one ex-member, who called the events "the great freakout of 1974." The ex-member remembered working extremely long hours for the group, and eating very little.

"I became theirs," the ex-member said.

"That's when it turned from being a political organization to being a cult," said another ex-member. "Once the members swallow something like that . . . you're willing to accept the deification of LaRouche."

Members went on a "war footing," another ex-member said, with many quitting their jobs and essentially cutting off relations with nonmembers.

Screenshot of the article “Ideological Odyssey: From Old Left to Far Right” by John Mintz, “The Washington Post”, January 14, 1985



In the late 1960s, LaRouche attracted a small group of followers who attended his Greenwich Village lectures on Marxist economics, associates said. LaRouche was known as an inspired Marxist theoretician at a time when other groups in the New Left were more given to street action. His group of about 100 believed its ideas alone could liberate the working class, and they said it would win state power in a matter of years, ex-members said.

LaRouche's followers were taken with his "intellectual brilliance," one ex-member said. "He had this amazing capacity to synthesize bodies of knowledge drawn from so many areas, from Beethoven and cognitive psychology to the philosophy of Descartes."

LaRouche was "eccentric and odd," a "mysterious character" who told a range of stories about his past and "stayed up for 24 hours at a stretch, talking nonstop," the ex-associate said.

In 1968, LaRouche's followers briefly took leadership of a student strike at Columbia University, but they ended up arguing with other leftist groups. LaRouche's followers later quit a leading New Left organization, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), over theoretical disagreements. Around that time they took the name they would keep, the NCLC.

LaRouche was "not domineering" in the earliest days, allowing dissent, one ex-member said. But by the early 1970s "his behavior changed increasingly and dramatically" in confronting members' disagreements, the ex-member said. Then he became "abusive and insulting" and resorted to "psychological intimidation."

In an interview, LaRouche denied that he had ever been a leftist, but he said that he had merely been opposed to senator Joseph McCarthy, the Wisconsin Republican who led an aggressive campaign against communists. But this assertion is contradicted by former associates and by dozens of the group's publications and internal reports explaining his beliefs of that time.

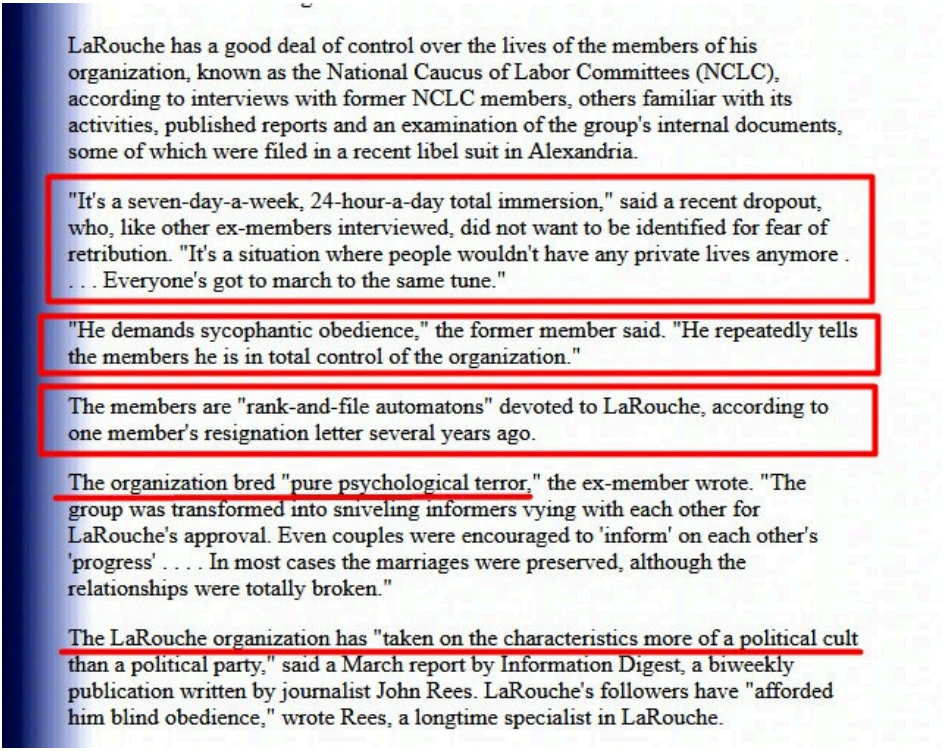
Some former members speak fondly of these days of leftist fervor, because they said things started changing in mid-1972. That is when LaRouche split up with his common-law wife, who then moved to England to marry an English follower of LaRouche's, according to ex-members and published reports.

LaRouche began to become more strident in his attacks on perceived foes, said ex-associates and experts on the group. At his urging, many members learned karate and street-fighting techniques, they said.

In April 1973, LaRouche ordered members to attack members of the Communist Party (CPUSA) and others in a plan called "Operation Mop-up," according to ex-members and published reports.

Screenshot of the article “Ideological Odyssey: From Old Left to Far Right” by John Mintz, “The Washington Post”, January 14, 1985

Now, let's take a look at the opinions of several "former members" or defectors, who, for safety reasons, chose to remain anonymous.



LaRouche has a good deal of control over the lives of the members of his organization, known as the National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC), according to interviews with former NCLC members, others familiar with its activities, published reports and an examination of the group's internal documents, some of which were filed in a recent libel suit in Alexandria.

"It's a seven-day-a-week, 24-hour-a-day total immersion," said a recent dropout, who, like other ex-members interviewed, did not want to be identified for fear of retribution. "It's a situation where people wouldn't have any private lives anymore . . . . Everyone's got to march to the same tune."

"He demands sycophantic obedience," the former member said. "He repeatedly tells the members he is in total control of the organization."

The members are "rank-and-file automatons" devoted to LaRouche, according to one member's resignation letter several years ago.

The organization bred "pure psychological terror," the ex-member wrote. "The group was transformed into sniveling informers vying with each other for LaRouche's approval. Even couples were encouraged to 'inform' on each other's 'progress' . . . . In most cases the marriages were preserved, although the relationships were totally broken."

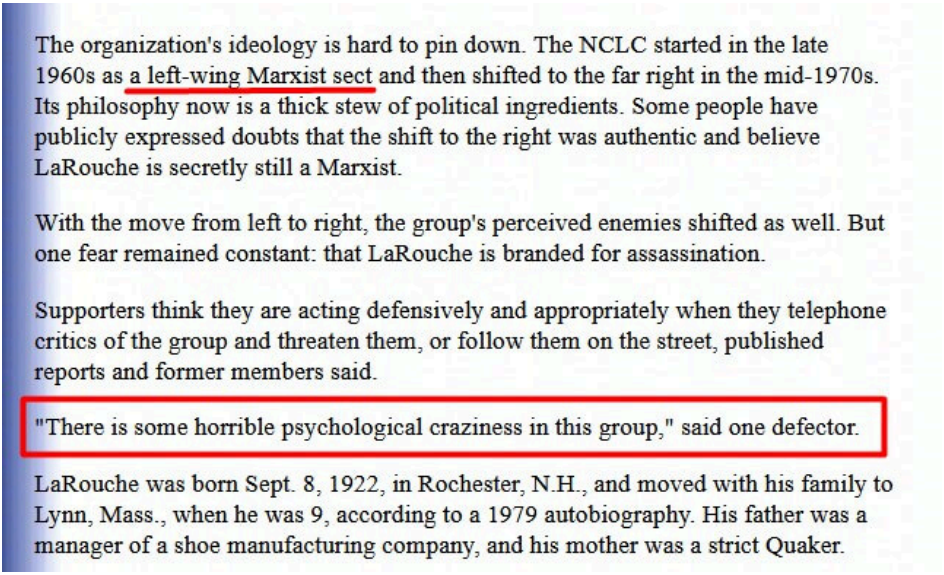
The LaRouche organization has "taken on the characteristics more of a political cult than a political party," said a March report by Information Digest, a biweekly publication written by journalist John Rees. LaRouche's followers have "afforded him blind obedience," wrote Rees, a longtime specialist in LaRouche.

Screenshot of the article "Ideological Odyssey: From Old Left to Far Right" by John Mintz, "The Washington Post", January 14, 1985

- "...people wouldn't have any private lives anymore... Everyone's got to march to the same tune..."
- "He (LaRouche) demands sycophantic obedience...".
- "...He is in total control of the organization..."
- "The members are 'rank-and-file automatons'"
- "...pure psychological terror..."

- "...the marriages were preserved, although the relationships were totally broken."
- "There is some horrible psychological craziness in this group,," said one defector.
- The ex-member remembered working extremely long hours for the group, and eating very little.
- Some LaRouche associates were trained in the use of guns, knives and other weapons at a "counterterrorism" school in Powder Springs, Ga., according to former members and other sources.
- "Amnesia is one of the necessary qualifications for membership," one ex-member said.

One could spend a long time debating how much of the above corresponds to reality. However, for those of us deeply immersed in the study of the issue, there is no doubt about the obvious fact: we are witnessing clear signs of the anticult strategy of dehumanization. We see these signs everywhere today.



The organization's ideology is hard to pin down. The NCLC started in the late 1960s as a left-wing Marxist sect and then shifted to the far right in the mid-1970s. Its philosophy now is a thick stew of political ingredients. Some people have publicly expressed doubts that the shift to the right was authentic and believe LaRouche is secretly still a Marxist.

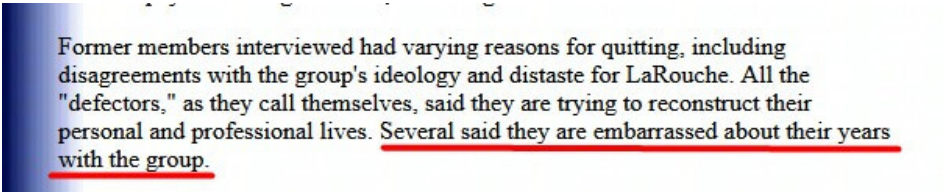
With the move from left to right, the group's perceived enemies shifted as well. But one fear remained constant: that LaRouche is branded for assassination.

Supporters think they are acting defensively and appropriately when they telephone critics of the group and threaten them, or follow them on the street, published reports and former members said.

"There is some horrible psychological craziness in this group," said one defector.

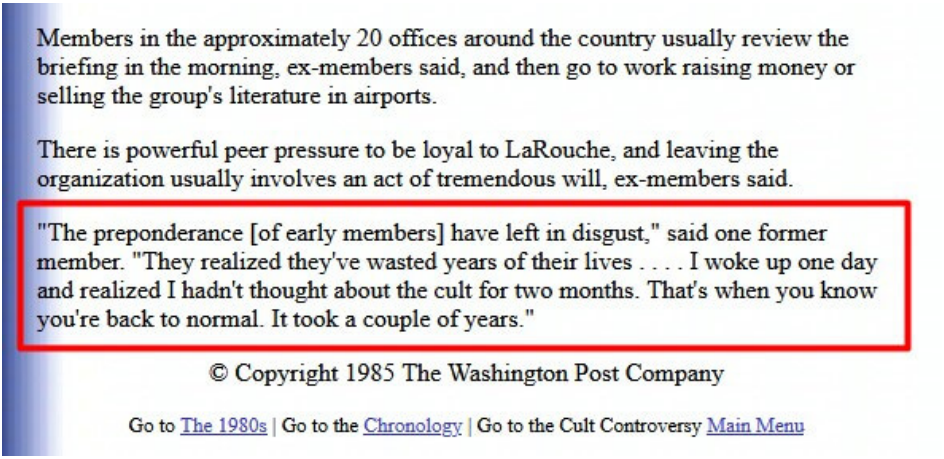
LaRouche was born Sept. 8, 1922, in Rochester, N.H., and moved with his family to Lynn, Mass., when he was 9, according to a 1979 autobiography. His father was a manager of a shoe manufacturing company, and his mother was a strict Quaker.

Screenshot of the article “Ideological Odyssey: From Old Left to Far Right” by John Mintz, “The Washington Post”, January 14, 1985



Former members interviewed had varying reasons for quitting, including disagreements with the group's ideology and distaste for LaRouche. All the "defectors," as they call themselves, said they are trying to reconstruct their personal and professional lives. Several said they are embarrassed about their years with the group.

Screenshot of the article “Ideological Odyssey: From Old Left to Far Right” by John Mintz, “The Washington Post”, January 14, 1985



Members in the approximately 20 offices around the country usually review the briefing in the morning, ex-members said, and then go to work raising money or selling the group's literature in airports.

There is powerful peer pressure to be loyal to LaRouche, and leaving the organization usually involves an act of tremendous will, ex-members said.

"The preponderance [of early members] have left in disgust," said one former member. "They realized they've wasted years of their lives . . . . I woke up one day and realized I hadn't thought about the cult for two months. That's when you know you're back to normal. It took a couple of years."

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Screenshot of the article "Ideological Odyssey: From Old Left to Far Right" by John Mintz, "The Washington Post", January 14, 1985

And the final stroke of the pen in John Mintz's "exposé magnum opus" is a quote from yet another anonymous "ex-," which could have put a definitive end to any political reputation, whether it was LaRouche or anyone else.

"*The preponderance (of early members) have left in disgust," said one former member. "They realized they've wasted years of their lives . . . . I woke up one day and realized I hadn't thought about the cult for two months. That's when you know you're back to normal. It took a couple of years.*" [8]

It feels like even back in 1985, anticultists were testing some terrorist methods, particularly the use of anonymous defectors or the creation of a fake victim, describing unbearable conditions within the cult or political movement. And of

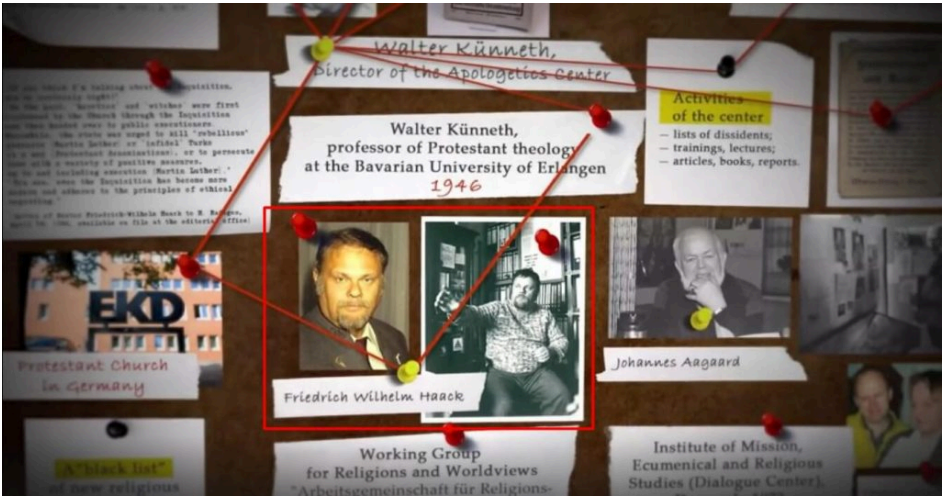
course, there's no guarantee that real victims existed at all. We detailed this in our article, "The Role of Apostates in Anti-Cult Organizations: Creating the Fake Victim."

Dishonest journalism is a scourge of modern media.

Something similar is happening today against Donald Trump. With intentions and financial backing, one can "commission" a smear campaign against any political or religious group to drive them out of the mainstream. And that's exactly what's happening.

It's also worth adding that Friedrich Haack [6], a notorious anticultist, was closely associated with the American Family Foundation (AFF), which played a role in the defamation of LaRouche. In his book "The Fight Against Sects. A Summarized Idea-historical Study" Bertil Persson writes:

"*Starting in 1985, Friedrich Haack was the international director of research for the American Family Foundation (AFF) in the U.S... Ultimately, he wove an extensive network of centers for information and deprogramming in the FRG, Western Europe, and the U.S.*"



Anticultist Friedrich Haack, screenshot from "The IMPACT" documentary

You can learn more about Haack and his ideological ties with the anticultists of Nazi Germany by watching "The IMPACT" documentary.

Source:

1. https://archive.schillerinstitute.com/slime_watch/aff_2-02_rmo.html
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"I realized that an expert isn't the one who knows something, but the one who is asked." A. Dvorkin 1 In our opinion, the year 2009 was a turning point in the fate of democratic reforms and religious freedoms in Russia,

January 5, 2025

South Korea and Japan: Nazi Legacy of Walter Künneth in Asian Countries

ARTICLES

Activities of the anticult movement in South Korea and Japan have repeatedly been brought to public attention by human rights advocates, lawyers, and independent human rights

December 9, 2024

Centralized International Anticult Network of Agents Led by Alexander Dvorkin

ARTICLES

Among European and British fighters against sects and cults one can find statements about their independent unbiased activities as well as absence of affiliation with

which resulted in the deaths of dozens of people, including children, was not just a national

experts. To a large extent, those activities have been examined from the perspective of numerous documented

the anticult agent network of the Russian pro-religious organization RACIRS and its leader Alexander Dvorkin. However, this

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actfiles@proton